

**Amendments to the Claims:**

Please cancel claims 1-5, 7, 8, 10-15, 18, and 19, without prejudice.

Please amend claims 6, 9, 16, 17, and 20, as specified in the following listing of claims.

The listing of claims given below will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Canceled)
2. (Canceled)
3. (Canceled)
4. (Canceled)
5. (Canceled)
6. (Currently amended) ~~The circuit as claimed in claim 5, in that it is connected to in each ease one system-side~~ In a power supply system comprising a rectifier, a converter, and a smoothing capacitor, wherein the rectifier has a first system-side input that is periodically connected to and disconnected from an AC voltage supply, a method for varying the power consumption of a load coupled to the smoothing capacitor, the method comprising the steps of:
  - a) creating a current path that bridges the smoothing capacitor during periods when the rectifier circuit is disconnected from the AC voltage supply;
  - b) charging the smoothing capacitor via the converter during periods when the first input of the rectifier is connected to the AC voltage supply and until such time as a voltage across the smoothing capacitor reaches a predetermined maximum value; and
  - c) providing a control element operable to detect the voltage across the smoothing capacitor and to selectively connect and disconnect the current path, wherein the control element is coupled to a second input of a the rectifier via a first resistor and a second resistor.
7. (Canceled)
8. (Canceled)

9. (Currently amended) ~~The circuit as claimed in claim 5, in that it has~~ In a power supply system comprising a rectifier, a converter, and a smoothing capacitor, wherein the rectifier has a first input that is periodically connected to and disconnected from an AC voltage supply, a method for varying the power consumption of a load coupled to the smoothing capacitor, the method comprising the steps of:

a) creating a current path that bridges the smoothing capacitor during periods when the first input of the rectifier is disconnected from the AC voltage supply;

b) charging the smoothing capacitor via the converter during periods when the first input of the rectifier is connected to the AC voltage supply and until such time as a voltage across the smoothing capacitor reaches a predetermined maximum value; and

c) providing a control element operable to detect the voltage across the smoothing capacitor and to selectively connect and disconnect the current path; and

d) providing an interface circuit connected upstream of it which is designed to short-circuit the inputs of the load upstream of the current path and the inductor and thus operable to bypass the current path and an inductor within the converter during times when no power is being supplied to the load.

10. (Canceled)

11. (Canceled)

12. (Canceled)

13. (Canceled)

14. (Canceled)

15. (Canceled)

16. (Currently amended) ~~The circuit as claimed in method of claim 6, in that it has wherein:~~ the converter is a step-up converter, the step-up converter including an inductor and a transistor that is controlled by the control element;

the current path being is guided via the inductor of the step-up converter and a the transistor of the step-up converter which can be controlled by the control element; and

the step-up converter being is designed to operate, once the system power supply has been applied to the load, during periods when the first input of the rectifier is connected to the AC voltage supply and until such time as the voltage across the smoothing capacitor of the load reaches a the predetermined maximum value.

17. (Currently amended) ~~The circuit as claimed in method of claim 6, in that it has further comprising the step of providing an interface circuit connected upstream of it which is designed to short-circuit the inputs of the load upstream of the current path and the inductor and thus operable to bypass the current path and the an inductor within the converter as long as during times when~~ no power is being supplied to the load.

18. (Canceled)

19. (Canceled)

20. (Currently amended) ~~The circuit as claimed in method of claim 6, in that the current path is designed such that, wherein:~~

the converter is a step-up converter; and

during operation of the step-up converter, ~~it~~ the current path carries on average over time a current which corresponds at least to a holding current required for maintaining ~~the closed a~~ a conductive state of a triac ~~in the system power supply.~~